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Schuler, Barbara (ed.). *Stifter und Mäzene und ihre Rolle in der Religion. Von Königen, Mönchen, Vordenkern und Laien in Indien, China und anderen Kulturen*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2013, 240 pp., ISBN 978-3-447-06945-8.

With "*Donors and Patrons, and their Role in Religion. Of Kings, Monks, Thought Leaders and Laymen in India, China and other Cultures*", Barbara Schuler presents a rich collection of articles with case studies concerning donors and patrons and their role in religion in non-European medieval cultures. Based on a lecture series at the University of Hamburg in 2011, the collection aims to "illuminate country- and region-specific aspects of founding and patronage, beyond the limits of a single individual culture (p. IX). With case studies from different regions of Asia and Africa, from the first to the 19th centuries CE, the volume proposes to offer stimuli for discussion on aspects of founding and patronage in religion, and to establish a basis for a comparative perspective in the research on patronage, founders and donors – an aim which it certainly achieved.

The introduction and six of the eight following articles are written in German, two articles are written in English. All articles, but not the introduction, are preceded by a short English abstract. A section of illustrations with 24 high quality color plates, a bibliography, a list of short biographies of the contributors, and separate indices for place names, personal names, and subjects complete the book.

Barbara Schuler in her introduction (in German) presents general considerations and research questions related to patronage and founding. Foundations and endowments have always been, and are to this day, an important element contributing to the material and economic sides of the growth and development of religions. She proposes a wide definition of founding and patronage, in order to encompass founding and patronage of monasteries, manuscript production (including copying and translating), schools and places of education, schools of thought, art and sacred architecture etc. (p. 6). Schuler lays out five possible perspectives for inquiry: the founder/patron, the recipients, the purpose, the culturally specific ideology, and the historical impact (Wirkungsgeschichte) of founda-

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tion and patronage. Sources available for research vary from documents of donations to colophons on manuscripts, paintings, steles, and inscriptions; their availability often depends on climate conditions, but also on transmission processes. An approach using quantification is therefore rather impossible; instead researchers are limited to collecting and analyzing singular case studies.

These case studies point to the fact that the practice of founding and patronage depended on a variety of cultural, religious, social, and political factors, and consequently was subject to great changes over time, with "booms" and "recessions" depending on contextual situations. With regard to the donors, the studies show a heterogeneous picture: while the studies concerning central Asia and India show donors from a wide variety of social classes, the contributions dealing with China, Thailand/Laos and Ethiopia show that emperors and kings were dominating. However, this reflects rather the materials scrutinized in these contributions than historical realities. Purposes of donations range from the accumulation of religious merit for the donor himself and his family, to requests for divine protection, to atonement for war, to more mundane goals of legitimation of power and extension of religious and political influence, the increase of social and economic standing of the donors, to cultural innovation and religious inclusivism. With regard to the recipients of donations, it is of major interest that in Asia, where different religions coexisted, donations often were spread to several religions, and donors were not necessarily active members of the particular religion, which received the donations. In contrast, the studies pertaining to Christian Ethiopia and the Islamic world show that promoting the donor's own religion was a major motive for donations.

In the section "East-Asia," the article "Patronage of Buddhist Buildings and Sovereignty in Medieval China," by Amy McNair (in English), presents four case studies of patronage from emperors of the Northern Wei Dynasty (386–534). The royal family of this dynasty "consistently patronized Buddhist building projects as a means to assert their sovereignty through the political symbolism unique to the history and scriptures of Buddhism" (p. 19). Within this larger context, McNair offers a nuanced analysis of the motivations of four cases of patronage of particular projects. Emperor Daowu (r. 386–409) embarked on a massive building project drawing on the symbolism of mythological and historical sites of India to establish the newly founded capital Pingcheng as the center of rule, while at the same time trying to outdo his main competitor, the emperor of Yao Xing in Chang'an. Emperor Wenchang (r. 452–465) sponsored the casting of five large standing images of Sakyamuni in bronze, and the carving of five grottoes with colossal Buddha images in Yungang (Nos. 16–20; with nos. 18–20 shown in Illustration 1). These Buddha images are believed to represent the Wei emperors up to his times. His motivations included the hope for the continued succession of the dynasty,

as well as expiation for the persecution of Buddhism perpetrated by his predecessor, emperor Taiwu (r. 452–452). Emperor Xuanwu (r. 499–515) sponsored two cave chapels in the Longmen site, after the relocation of the capital of Wei to Luoyang. Analyzing the complex program of iconography of one of these chapels, the Binyang Central Grotto (shown in Illustration 2), McNair argues that it mixes intimately personal issues with political aims; the emperor's father, who had died at the age of 33 on a military campaign, is represented as patron of Buddhism and king of all China – an ambition he never fulfilled due to his premature death – and the emperor Xuanwu himself as a "filial, wise, compassionate and generous bodhisattva-prince." The last case, the sponsoring of a nine-storied pagoda and the Yongning Temple by empress dowager Hu, [died 528], in McNairs analysis, represents the attempt of the empress dowager, to "dissolve the loyalty of the populace to the ruling family of the Wei, and overwhelm the objections of Confucian officials to women involved in politics" (p. 39).

In the section on Central-Asia, "Founders and Texts from the Silk Road" by Peter Zieme (in German), discusses patronage based on documents from the Uighur empire from the 10th to 14th centuries. Zieme contextualizes the question of donations in a discourse of inner-outer, with "inner" referring to religion and "outer" referring to worldly powers. In the small states along the silk-road, Christians, Manichaeans, and Buddhists were well established. Zieme points out that in old Uighur language, terms to denote the concept of donation derive from Sanskrit (as *dāna* or *lab, from labha*), Chinese (*buši* from *bushi* 布施), Syrian *zadaqua*, or arabic *şadaqa*. The importance of almsgiving and donations is emphasized in Manichaean and Christian texts as well as in various Buddhist texts in old Uighur language, attesting to the fact that donations were part of all religious practice in Central Asia. Colophons of old Uighur texts show that sponsors of texts may come from all social strata, from kings to monastics, to simple layfolk. Of particular interest is the fact that there are many images of donors to be found in Dunhuang but also in other places along the silk-road. As motives for donations, the generation of merit (*punya*), also to be transferred to others, expiation of sins, and salvation are mentioned most frequently; furthermore simple presentation to eternalize the donor might have played a role as well. Finally, Zieme presents five examples of images of donors from banners and manuscripts (shown also in the illustration section) with a concise description and a translation of the inscriptions.

The contribution for South-East Asia is the most substantial article of the volume: "Endowments for Buddhist monasteries in the Thai-Lao kingdoms of Lan Na and Lan Sang from the 14th–17th centuries" by Volker Grabowsky (in German). Based on evidence from inscriptions, Grabowsky discusses endowments of land or manpower to monasteries, usually by kings or members of the royal families of

Lan Na and Lan Sang. Two long tables in the appendix offer a detailed survey of these inscriptions, noting dates of inscription, dates of donation, name of monastery and donor, as well as detailed descriptions of manpower and land-allotments for the endowments in Lan Na (1300–1700) and for those in Lan Sang (1353–1830). At least since the 15th century, kings in the Thai-Laotian area legitimized their power not only through family relationships, but also through the spiritual and moral power of personifying the ideal of a *cakravartin*, the Buddhist universal ruler, and that of the *dharmarāja*, the just Buddhist monarch. Worldly and religious power thus became closely intertwined, and religious offerings, in particular endowments of land and manpower to monasteries, were considered among the foremost duties of a king. Grabowsky offers a detailed discussion of such endowments in both kingdoms, describing endowments, their economic value as well as provisions to secure them. The king was donor of most of the endowments documented; Grabowsky explains how the practice of offering endowments of land and manpower to monasteries offered an important tool to the kings for extending their spheres of influence into regions which were under the control of governors, countering potentially centrifugal systems of power by a network of loyal religious institutions. Furthermore, land endowments could serve to extend their rule into uncultivated lands and encourage settlement expansion. Discussing differences between the inscriptions of Lan Na and Lan Sang, Grabowski points out that while inscriptions from Lan Na focus more on the exact numbers of manpower offered, those from Lan Sang offer more precise details on the land allotments, including measurements. Furthermore, inscriptions from Lan Sang contain explicit prohibitions to secure the land and manpower for the sole use of the monasteries – suggesting possibly more attempts to draft members of donated families for military or civil service in Lan Sang than in Lan Na.

Annette Schmiedchen's essay "Endowments for the Upkeep of Buddhist Monasteries in India (1st–10th centuries)" (in German) discusses donations in South-Asia. Analyzing stone inscriptions and copperplate documents, the author focuses on changes in the practice of endowments for the upkeep of Buddhist monasteries, and on the relation of Buddhist endowments to those for other religions. Early epigraphic evidence from the first centuries CE for endowments to monasteries comes from northern Central-India, the north, the northwest, and the promontories. The sources document that many of the donors were private persons, sometimes together with families or guilds, and that they were predominantly urban professionals, with only few cases of rural villagers or members of royal families. Donations included cave sanctuaries, buildings or parts of buildings, money, land, and villages for tax privilege, the latter however were offered only by kings. Recipients mentioned were usually a group of monks with specified adherence to a particular school. The spread of Buddhism all over the Indian

subcontinent coincided with the "renaissance" of Vedic Brahmanism in the Gupta period (320– ~500 CE), with a decline of the trade with the western regions, and with the decline of the cities. After the 6th century CE, donations of the type seen in the earlier inscriptions declined. However, this was partly compensated by donations from the circles of the court. These donations are recorded since the 4/5th century on copper-tablets, which seem to have been reserved for royal religious donations. Thousands of these copper-tablets have been found all over India, documenting that almost all early medieval Indian royal houses were actively donating to religious communities. Buddhist establishments had to compete for patronage with Brahmins, and with Hindu and Jain temples. The majority of recipients of religious donations in all cases, even in those of Buddhist kings, were Brahmins, single or in small groups. Endowments for the upkeep of Buddhist monasteries are mentioned less frequently; however, due to their purposes they were often more substantial than those to individual Brahmins: comparatively smaller land donations to Brahmins served mainly to feed one family; instead, donations to Buddhist monasteries served for the upkeep of all the local monks or nuns in terms of food, clothing, medicine, furniture, and monastic buildings. Interestingly, the copying of scriptures is rarely mentioned as purpose of endowments. With regard to the patrons' aims, it seems that the attainment of merit (*punya*) is prominent in donations to all religions. After the 9th century, endowments for Buddhist monasteries declined drastically, as did Buddhist monastic culture in general, with the exception of Sri Lanka and the kingdom of the Pālas (~740–1125) in Bihar and Bengal, where Buddhism flourished through the 12/13th centuries. Overall, also in the Indian context, political motivations for royal donations to religious communities are clearly visible, and also here donations were used to create loyalties of religious institutions to counteract centrifugal forces of power.

The second article on South Asia, by Oskar von Hinüber, "Rock drawings, Bronzes, Manuscripts and Cult Objects: The Kings of Palola as Founders of a Buddhist Culture", discusses bronzes and manuscripts donated by the Bhagadatta family, who ruled the kingdom of Palola or Paṭola in the area of Gilgit from the late sixth to the early eighth centuries CE. The manuscripts were discovered 1931 in Naumpur near Gilgit in the only surviving library from ancient India; their colophons furnish a genealogy of the kings of Palola. The bronzes sponsored by the Palola family are the largest coherent collection of Buddha-images which can be clearly located in time and geographical origin, namely in Gilgit beween the 7th and 8th centuries CE. Von Hinüber proposes that this material allows a study not only of large cultic donations such as the land endowments addressed in the preceding articles, but also of smaller donations of cult objects, which might offer a different perspective on the religious life of a pious Buddhist royal family and

their patronage activities. The author offers a detailed discussion of several cultic objects and bronzes, also reproduced as images in the illustration section, relating them to the colophons and images found in the manuscripts. The findings are then compared to roughly contemporary rock-drawings from the area (of which also 3 examples are reproduced as images), which are Buddhist donations by common people. Pointing out that while the rock drawings in terms of iconography are easily identifiable, the bronzes donated by the Palola kings show very different iconographical patterns, von Hinüber suggests that the Palola kings were trying to inaugurate their own iconographic program; the artists working for them seem to have created their own iconography with recourse to the Buddhist scriptures. Overall, the bronze Buddha-images sponsored by the Baghavadatta family indicate the longstanding dedication of this royal family to Buddhism; however, questions about the recipients of the donations and the purposes of the objects remain open.

In the section on the Near-East, Jan-Peter Hartung's essay "Schools, Networks, Traditions: about the institutionalization of knowledge in the early modern Persianate world" adds intellectual history to the issues of patronage raised so far. The author proposes a heuristic model to help understand "processes of intellectual tradition building in the early modern Persianate world and beyond" (p. 135). This essay asks for the effects of patronage in the intellectual realm: Why do some authors' texts survive for posterity and others don't? Hartung argues that content is only one, possibly minor, reason. Instead, "the emergence of a learned tradition and its institutionalization in a 'school of thought' depends on mainly two interrelated social mechanisms" (p. 135), courtly patronage and the practice of "commenting upon prevalent ideas." Hartung distinguishes between an outward directed field, where affirmation of sovereignty is important, and an inward directed field, where strife for "objective" or "absolute" truth is central. Different intertwined social mechanisms thus constitute a multidimensional discursive field, within which claims to truth are negotiated (p. 146). For both fields, Hartung discusses examples from the Indo-Persian knowledge cultures. He raises the case of Faẓlallāh ibn Fayżallāh from Shiraz (died after 1417) and Mahmud-I Gāvān from Gilan (died 1481), both employed by the Bahmanides, who ruled in the Indian Dekkan in the 14th century, with the aim to make the seat of the Bahmanides a center of Persian culture. Bahmanides' legitimation strategies rested to a large extent on a cultural Persianization, also in order to differentiate themselves from the Sultanate in Delhi. While the two scholars did not succeed in bringing scholars from Iran to India, they did succeed in establishing a context for Iranian authors' texts to enter South-Asia. In the case of these examples, common place of origin of patron and client was decisive for patronage,

another decisive factor was intellectual descent, the lineage of teachers of a scholar. Differently, the examples of the scholars ʻAbd al-Hakīm Siyālkotī (died 1656) and Mahmūd ibn Muhammmad ʻUmarī Ǧawnpūrī (died 1652), both employed by Mogul rulers, show that intellectual lineage was not always decisive, since both had proven their worth in their own right, without an illustrious intellectual lineage.

With the observation that the emergence of a tradition cannot be justified with political calculations alone, Hartung then turns to the "inward directed field." Any emerging tradition needs to engage critically and convincingly with existing traditions. Here the issue is not political calculation, but claims to truth. Hartung argues for the important function of commentaries in this process, because summarizing previous knowledge and relating it to the present, they create 'chains of tradition' ("Traditionsketten", p. 141). When, however, a commentary is understood as "summa" of previous traditions, it may serve then as a foundation for a new line of tradition, and at this point strife for truth makes space again for social considerations and social networking. Strategic use of communities of scholars and their disciples becomes essential in the emergence (or not) of a new tradition. Hartung underscores this with examples including a critique of Henri Corbin's assumption of an "Isfahan school" for a group of Safavid scholars from the 17th century, and an account of the emergence of the "Frangī-Mahall school" during the time of Awrangzeb (reigned 1658–1707).

Hartung concludes that motivations of patrons and scholars vary, depending on the inward or outward directed fields and their respective concerns. The main concern in the inward directed field is to strive for higher truth, but social networks like teacher-student or master-adept relationships are also decisive. These hierarchical relationships and resulting networks lead to the confirmation of a tradition in form of a school of thought. Scholars active in the "inward directed field" however need sustenance, and that mostly comes from patronage. Patronage depends often on situational or political calculations; thus there is a need for trust in the capacities of the scholar. Since individual capacities however are hard to gauge for outsiders, intellectual lineage, schools of thought, and common place of origin of patron and client serve to connect the inward and outward directed fields.

The article "A foundation in the Islamic World: Who founded the Academy Madresse Madare Shah in Isfahan/Iran?" (in German), by Monika Dahnke (Roschanzamir) discusses an early 18th century pious Islamic foundation consisting of a theological academy, supported by an adjacent bazaar and caravanserai. The building complex, a "pearl of architecture" (p. 150), is described in its state today. The author assumes the entire complex, consisting of the academy, bazaar and

caravanserai, was founded by the mother of Shah Sultan Hossein (reigned 1694–1722). With no known documentation of the foundation available, Dahnke set out to study the inscriptions in the building complex and a detailed local history "*Gandschiye al-athare ta'richeye Isfahan* (Treasure of the Traces of the History of Isfahan) by Lutfallah Hunarfars. Piecing together different evidence, she notes that the Shah in all texts is named as builder, but not as founder of the academy, while his mother is explicitly named as the founder of the adjacent buildings. She speculates that the motivation for the foundation might have been piety and the wish to create financial security for following generations.

The last article "Kings and Saints: Founders of Dynasties, Monasteries and Churches in Christian Ethiopia", written in English by Alessandro Bausi, presents a case study from Africa. The author points out that for the Ethiopian Christian context, patronage and maecenatism have been well studied, however with a focus only on the time after the 15th century. He proposes instead to look in the distant past to elucidate some features of Ethiopian conceptions of patronage. In early epigraphic dedications to South Arabian deities in Sabaic language, the terms for "offer", "dedicate" appear together with the term for king. Bausi presents similarities of two inscriptions from the kingdom of Aksum (fl. 3rd–7th centuries CE) recording dedications of monumental thrones to Greek deities, and an inscription from the early Christian phase with a similar dedication of a throne. Turning to explicit mention of church foundations, he finds the earliest evidence in an inscription from the sixth century by King Kālēb; which is confirmed by historical records and hagiographical literature. The latter in particular can serve to illuminate the dynamics of foundation and donation, and its *topoi* establish a relationship to Late Antiquity. Further supporting his argument that the role of kingship in the ideology of foundation and patronage is rooted in a late antique context, Bausi then cites as examples the kings of the Zāgʷē dynasty (12th–13th century), credited with the foundation of the famous rock-hewn churches of Lāstā. The formula recording the foundation of churches in documentary texts from the Zāgʷē court, as well as from the following Solomonic dynasty, was in Bausi's view part of the Aksumite heritage. Bausi then shows how a similar continuity is manifest in other aspects of civilization, like in foundations of monasteries by monks, literary patronage, endowments for churches of the rights to land-use, the institution of commemoration (*tazkāri*), the institution of the covenant (*kidān*), and the institution of the banquet (*geber*).

This collection of articles adds valuable material and perspectives to the field of patronage studies, which considering its fundamental importance for the development of religions has not received adequate scholarly attention. In particular, comparative inter-cultural approaches are still rare, and it is here that the volume offers a major contribution, adding case studies from regions and reli-

gions not covered in existing publications,[1] thus expanding the evolving field of inter-cultural comparative studies of patronage. The volume will be of interest to historians, historians of religions, anthropologists, and other scholars interested in the phenomenon of religious patronage and founding, as well as those interested more generally in questions of the relation of politics, religion and thought. The individual case-studies will furthermore be of interest to scholars engaged in area studies of the regions represented in this book.

1 For one of the few studies, which is also part of the frame of reference of the volume under discussion see Borgolte, Michael: *Stiftungen in Christentum, Judentum und Islam vor der Moderne: Auf der Suche nach ihren Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschieden in religiösen Grundlagen, praktischen Zwecken und historischen Transformationen.* Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005.